

Cambridge University Press

0521827310 - Postcolonial Approaches to the European Middle Ages: Translating Cultures

Edited by Ananya Jahanara Kabir and Deanne Williams

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

POSTCOLONIAL APPROACHES TO THE EUROPEAN MIDDLE AGES

This collection of original essays is dedicated to the intersections between medieval and postcolonial studies. Ranging across a variety of academic disciplines, from art history to cartography, and from Anglo-Saxon to Arabic studies, this volume highlights the connections between medieval and postcolonial studies by exploring a theme common to both areas of study: translation as a mechanism of and metaphor for cultures in contact, confrontation, and competition. Drawing upon the widespread medieval trope of *translatio studii et imperii* (the translation of culture and empire), this collection engages the concept of translation from its most narrow, lexicographic sense, to the broader applications of its literal meaning, “to carry across.” It carries the multilingual, multicultural realities of medieval studies to postcolonial analyses of the coercive and subversive powers of cultural translation, offering a set of case studies of translation as the transfer of language, culture, and power.

DEANNE WILLIAMS is Associate Professor of English at York University, Toronto. She is the author of *The French Fetish from Chaucer to Shakespeare* (Cambridge, 2004).

ANANYA JAHANARA KABIR is Lecturer in the School of English at University of Leeds, UK. She is the author of *Paradise, Death and Doomsday in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge, 2001) and is currently working on post-partition cultural politics in South Asia.

Cambridge University Press

0521827310 - Postcolonial Approaches to the European Middle Ages: Translating Cultures

Edited by Ananya Jahanara Kabir and Deanne Williams

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN MEDIEVAL LITERATURE

General editor

Alastair Minnis, *University of York*

Editorial board

Zygmunt G. Barański, *University of Cambridge*

Christopher C. Baswell, *University of California, Los Angeles*

John Burrow, *University of Bristol*

Mary Carruthers, *New York University*

Rita Copeland, *University of Pennsylvania*

Simon Gaunt, *King's College, London*

Steven Kruger, *City University of New York*

Nigel Palmer, *University of Oxford*

Winthrop Wetherbee, *Cornell University*

Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, *Fordham University*

This series of critical books seeks to cover the whole area of literature written in the major medieval languages – the main European vernaculars, and medieval Latin and Greek – during the period c. 1100–1500. Its chief aim is to publish and stimulate fresh scholarship and criticism on medieval literature, special emphasis being placed on understanding major works of poetry, prose, and drama in relation to the contemporary culture and learning which fostered them.

Recent titles in the series

Margaret Clunies Ross *Old Icelandic Literature and Society*

Donald Maddox *Fictions of Identity in Medieval France*

Rita Copeland *Pedagogy, Intellectuals and Dissent in the Later Middle Ages:*

Lollardy and Ideas of Learning

Kantik Ghosh *The Wycliffite Heresy: Authority and the Interpretation of Texts*

Mary C. Erler *Women, Reading, and Piety in Late Medieval England*

D. H. Green *The Beginnings of Medieval Romance: Fact and Fiction, 1150–1220*

J. A. Burrow *Gestures and Looks in Medieval Narrative*

Ardis Butterfield *Poetry and Music in Medieval France: From Jean Renart to*

Guillaume de Machaut

Emily Steiner *Documentary Culture and the Making of Medieval English Literature*

William E. Burgwinkle *Sodomy, Masculinity and Law in Medieval Literature*

Nick Havely *Dante and the Franciscans: Poverty and the Papacy in the Commedia*

Siegfried Wenzel *Latin Sermon Collections from Later Medieval England*

A complete list of titles in the series can be found at the end of the volume.

Cambridge University Press

0521827310 - Postcolonial Approaches to the European Middle Ages: Translating Cultures

Edited by Ananya Jahanara Kabir and Deanne Williams

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

POSTCOLONIAL
APPROACHES TO THE
EUROPEAN MIDDLE AGES
Translating Cultures

Edited by

ANANYA JAHANARA KABIR

University of Leeds

and

DEANNE WILLIAMS

York University



Cambridge University Press

0521827310 - Postcolonial Approaches to the European Middle Ages: Translating Cultures
 Edited by Ananya Jahanara Kabir and Deanne Williams

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521827317

© Cambridge University Press 2005

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
 and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
 no reproduction of any part may take place without
 the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2005

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Postcolonial approaches to the European Middle Ages: translating cultures / edited by Ananya
 Jahanara Kabir and Deanne Williams.

p. cm. – (Cambridge studies in medieval literature 54)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 82731 0

I. Literature, Medieval – History and criticism. I. Kabir, Ananya Jahanara, 1970–
 II. Williams, Deanne. III. Series.

PN681.P55 2005

809'.02 – dc22 2004051852

ISBN-13 978-0-521-82731-7 hardback

ISBN-10 0-521-82731-0 hardback

ISBN-13 978-0-521- paperback

ISBN-10 0-521- paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external
 or third-party internet websites referred to in this book, and does not guarantee that any content on
 such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press

0521827310 - Postcolonial Approaches to the European Middle Ages: Translating Cultures

Edited by Ananya Jahanara Kabir and Deanne Williams

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

<i>List of illustrations</i>	<i>page</i> vii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
<i>List of contributors</i>	xi
1 Introduction: a return to wonder <i>Ananya Jahanara Kabir and Deanne Williams</i>	I
Part I The afterlife of Rome	
2 Anglo-Saxon England and the postcolonial void <i>Nicholas Howe</i>	25
3 Mapping the ends of empire <i>Alfred Hiatt</i>	48
4 “On fagne flor”: the postcolonial <i>Beowulf</i> , from Heorot to Heaney <i>Seth Lerer</i>	77
Part II Orientalism before 1600	
5 Alexander in the Orient: bodies and boundaries in the <i>Roman de toute chevalerie</i> <i>Suzanne Conklin Akbari</i>	105
6 Gower’s monster <i>Deanne Williams</i>	127

Cambridge University Press

0521827310 - Postcolonial Approaches to the European Middle Ages: Translating Cultures

Edited by Ananya Jahanara Kabir and Deanne Williams

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Contents*

- 7 Turks as Trojans; Trojans as Turks: visual imagery of the Trojan War and the politics of cultural identity in fifteenth-century Europe 151
James G. Harper

Part III Memory and nostalgia

- 8 Analogy in translation: imperial Rome, medieval England, and British India 183
Ananya Jahanara Kabir
- 9 “Au commencement était l’île”: the colonial formation of Joseph Bédier’s *Chanson de Roland* 205
Michelle R. Warren
- 10 The protocolonial baroque of *La Celestina* 227
Roland Greene

Epilogue

- 11 Translations and transnationals: pre- and postcolonial 253
Ato Quayson
- Bibliography* 269
- Index* 288

Cambridge University Press

0521827310 - Postcolonial Approaches to the European Middle Ages: Translating Cultures

Edited by Ananya Jahanara Kabir and Deanne Williams

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Illustrations

- | | | |
|---|---|--------|
| 1 | The Meeting of the Magi, <i>Les très riches heures de Jean, duc de Berry</i> , fol. 51, v. Courtesy of the Library of Congress. | page 3 |
| 2 | T-O map in a tenth-century manuscript of Isidore of Seville's <i>Etymologiae</i> : London, British Library, MS Royal 6.C.1, fol. 108v. Reproduced by permission of the British Library. | 50 |
| 3 | Zonal map in a manuscript from c. 1200 from William of Conches, <i>Dragmaticon</i> : London, British Library, MS Arundel 377, fol. 133r. Reproduced by permission of the British Library. | 51 |
| 4 | Beatus map: Paris, BN MS Lat. 8878, between fols. 45 and 46. Reproduced by permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. | 58 |
| 5 | Hereford Map, c. 1290. Reproduced by permission of the Dean and Chapter of Hereford Cathedral and the Hereford Mappa Mundi Trust. | 59 |
| 6 | Matthew Paris, Map of Palestine I: London, British Library, MS Royal 14.C.VII, fols. 4v-5r. Reproduced by permission of the British Library. | 62 |
| 7 | Matthew Paris, Map of Palestine II: Oxford, Corpus Christi College MS 2, fol. 2v. Reproduced by permission of the President and Fellows of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. | 65 |
| 8 | Pietro Vesconte, Map of Palestine: Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, MS 9404-5, fols. 173v-174r. Reproduced by permission of the Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique. | 66 |

Cambridge University Press

0521827310 - Postcolonial Approaches to the European Middle Ages: Translating Cultures

Edited by Ananya Jahanara Kabir and Deanne Williams

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*List of illustrations*

- 9 Catalan Atlas: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS ESP 30, detail showing Guinea. Reproduced by permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. 70
- 10 Anonymous sculptor, marble sarcophagus with Aeneas departing for the hunt, second century AD, Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome. Reproduced by permission of the Deutsches Archeologisches Institut, Rome. 155
- 11 Jean de Courcy, *Antenor, Priam the Younger, Dido and Romulus as City Founders*, illuminated manuscript page from the *Chronique universelle* (inv. 20124, fol. 154), 1431, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris. Reproduced by permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris. 159
- 12 The Coëtivy Master, detail of the left section of *The Death of Troilus, Achilles and Paris*. Reproduced by permission of the Cabildo Catedral de Zamora. 161
- 13 The Coëtivy Master, detail of the central section of *The Death of Troilus, Achilles and Paris*. Reproduced by permission of the Cabildo Catedral de Zamora. 162
- 14 The Coëtivy Master, detail of the right section of *The Death of Troilus, Achilles and Paris*. Reproduced by permission of the Cabildo Catedral de Zamora. 163
- 15 Federico Barocci, *The Flight of Aeneas from Troy*. Reproduced by permission of the Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione, Ministero Beni e Attività Culturali, Rome. 169

Cambridge University Press

0521827310 - Postcolonial Approaches to the European Middle Ages: Translating Cultures

Edited by Ananya Jahanara Kabir and Deanne Williams

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

This book shows how continuities as well as disjunctions in time and space are crucial in conceptualizing historical processes. When we arrived at Oxford from Toronto and Calcutta to embark on our careers in medieval literature, we did not realize that we were, perhaps, post-colonial medievalists *avant la lettre*. What did strike us both then was the sudden expansion of spatial and temporal horizons that our new life entailed. This sense of wonder has sustained us, even as it has itself been sustained, during our subsequent intellectual journeys, parallel and intertwined. This collection of essays can be seen as its tangible avatar.

The collection was conceived through fruitful conversations during spring 2000; the many splendors (including gastronomic) of the Bay Area provided key inspiration. We would like to thank John Niles at the English Department, UC Berkeley, and the John Sias Dissertation Fellowship at Stanford University, for giving us the opportunity to be in (roughly) the same place at the same time. Seth Lerer and Ato Quayson encouraged this project from the very beginning, and we are grateful to them for their assistance.

We would also like to thank Alastair Minnis for welcoming this collection into his series, Linda Bree, our Cambridge editor, for her endless patience and goodwill, and our contributors for their enthusiastic participation in this long-term, long-distance relationship. The collection as a whole benefited greatly from the insightful comments of anonymous readers for the Press, and from the inspiration and insight of the participants and organizers of the “Orientalism before 1600” conference, which took place at Trinity College, Cambridge, in June 2001. Trinity College, Cambridge, the Centre for History and Economics at King’s College, Cambridge, the University of Leeds, York University,

Cambridge University Press

0521827310 - Postcolonial Approaches to the European Middle Ages: Translating Cultures

Edited by Ananya Jahanara Kabir and Deanne Williams

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

the University of Toronto, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Huntington Library, and the Folger Shakespeare Library provided us with financial support and ideal environments for completing various stages of the project.

We acknowledge with gratitude and pleasure the encouragement, advice, and support of our friends Amartya Sen and Emma Rothschild, Montu Saxena, James Simpson, David Dumville, Alfred Hiatt, and Simon Palfrey, and our teachers and mentors at Oxford: Helen Cooper, Malcolm Godden, Douglas Gray, Rohini Jayatilaka, Heather O'Donoghue, and Eric Stanley. Andreas Bückner, Magnus Marsden and Priya Natarajan opened up their Cambridge homes to Ananya, often at short notice, during her year spent in Geneva. Very special thanks are due to the Kabirs at Calcutta and the Dasguptas at Delhi for their kind hospitality, and to our wonderful partners, Mrinal Dasgupta and Terry Goldie, for their good humor, great wisdom, and endless indulgence. Finally, we would like to record our profound debt to the late Edward Said, from whose intellectual and political achievements we, along with so many others, draw continuing inspiration.

This book is dedicated to our mothers, Mary Chesney and Khairan Ara Kabir, and to the institution that brought us together, our alma mater, Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford.

Cambridge University Press

0521827310 - Postcolonial Approaches to the European Middle Ages: Translating Cultures

Edited by Ananya Jahanara Kabir and Deanne Williams

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contributors

Suzanne Conklin Akbari is Associate Professor of English and Medieval Studies at the University of Toronto. Her work, which focuses on the intersection of literary and intellectual history, includes *Seeing through the Veil: Medieval Allegory and Optical Theory* (University of Toronto Press, 2004) and *Idols in the East: European Representations of Islam and the Orient, 1100–1450* (University of Pennsylvania Press, forthcoming).

Roland Greene is Professor of English and Comparative Literature and Head of the Division of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages at Stanford University. His most recent book is *Unrequited Conquests* (University of Chicago Press, 1999). Greene is also the author of *Post-Petrarchism: Origins and Innovations of the Western Lyric Sequence* (Princeton, 1991) and the editor, with Elizabeth Fowler, of *The Project of Prose in Early Modern Europe and the New World* (Cambridge University Press, 1997).

James G. Harper, Assistant Professor of Art History at the University of Oregon, received his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania in 1998. He is the Rush Kress Fellow at Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, 2003–4. He is currently editing a volume of essays entitled *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye (1453–1750)*.

Alfred Hiatt is a Lecturer in the School of English, and a member of the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of Leeds. He is the author of *The Making of Medieval Forgeries: False Documents in Fifteenth-Century England* (British Library, 2003).

Nicholas Howe is Professor of English at the University of California, Berkeley. He is the author of *The Old English Catalogue Poems*

Cambridge University Press

0521827310 - Postcolonial Approaches to the European Middle Ages: Translating Cultures

Edited by Ananya Jahanara Kabir and Deanne Williams

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*List of contributors*

(Copenhagen, 1985), *Migration and Mythmaking in Anglo-Saxon England* (Yale University Press, 1989), and *Across an Inland Sea: Writing in Place from Buffalo to Berlin* (Princeton University Press, 2003). He is currently at work on two books: *Writing the Map of Anglo-Saxon England* and *The Yale Guide to Old English Literature*.

Ananya Jahanara Kabir is Lecturer in Postcolonial Literatures at the School of English, and a member of the Centre of Medieval Studies at the University of Leeds. She is the author of *Paradise, Death and Doomsday in Anglo-Saxon Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 2001). She is currently working on a study of imperial medievalism and researching literary responses to political conflict in Kashmir.

Seth Lerer is the Avalon Foundation Professor in Humanities and Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Stanford University. His most recent book is *Error and the Academic Self: The Scholarly Imagination, Medieval to Modern* (Columbia University Press, 2003).

Ato Quayson is Director of the African Studies Centre, Lecturer in English and Fellow of Pembroke College, University of Cambridge. His publications include *Strategic Transformations in Nigerian Writing* (Indiana University Press and James Currey, 1997), *Postcolonialism: Theory, Practice or Process* (Polity, 2000), *Relocating Postcolonialism* with David Theo Goldberg (Blackwell, 2002) and *Calibrations: Reading for the Social* (Minnesota University Press, 2003). He is currently working on a comparative study of representations of physical disability in world literature.

Michelle R. Warren is Associate Professor of French and Director of Graduate Studies at the University of Miami. She is the author of *History on the Edge: Excalibur and the Borders of Britain, 1100-1300* (Minnesota University Press, 2000) and co-editor of *Postcolonial Moves: Medieval through Modern* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) and *Arts of Calculation: Quantifying Thought in Early Modern Europe* (Palgrave Macmillan, forthcoming).

Deanne Williams is Associate Professor of English at York University, Toronto. She is the author of *The French Fetish from Chaucer to Shakespeare* (Cambridge University Press, 2004).